

Skald

The skald is a long line of warrior-poets, storytellers, and heroes. They bring the lore of past wars, ancient monsters, and forgotten kings wherever they go. They can compose poetry, and recite ancient epics to inspire their comrades, as well as allow themselves to become a conduit of pure emotion. Their study of ancient rhymes isn't focused and rigid, but fluid, and ever changing. They focus as much on the emotion that poems inspire as much as the poems themselves.

The skald is an archetype of the bard class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: A skald is proficient with all simple and martial weapons, light and medium armor, and shields (except tower shields). A skald can perform bard songs while wearing light or medium armor and even using a shield without incurring the normal song failure chance. Like mages, a skald wearing heavy armor incurs a chance of song failure.

This ability replaces the bard's normal weapon and armor proficiencies.

Raging Song (Su): A skald is trained to use music, oration, and similar performances to inspire his allies to feats of strength and ferocity. At 1st level, a skald can use this ability for a number of rounds per day equal to 3 + his Charisma modifier. For each level thereafter, he can use raging song for 2 additional rounds per day.

Starting a raging song is a standard action, but it can be maintained each round as a free action. A raging song cannot be disrupted, but it ends immediately if the skald is killed, paralyzed, stunned, knocked unconscious, or otherwise prevented from taking a free action each round to maintain it. A raging song counts as the bard's bardic performance special ability for any effect that affects bardic performances. A skald may learn bard masterpieces.

A raging song has audible components, but not visual components. Affected allies must be able to hear the skald for the song to have any effect. A deaf skald has a 20% chance to fail when attempting to use a raging song. If he fails this check, the attempt still counts against his daily limit. Deaf creatures are immune to raging songs.

If a raging song affects allies, when the skald begins a raging song and at the start of each ally's turn in which they can hear the raging song, the skald's allies must decide whether to accept or refuse its effects. This is not an action. Unconscious allies automatically accept the song. If accepted, the raging song's effects last for that ally's turn or until the song ends, whichever comes first.

At 7th level, a skald can start a raging song as a move action instead of a standard action. At 13th level, a skald can start a raging song as a swift action instead.

This ability replaces bardic performance.

Inspired Rage (Su): At 1st level, a skald can use raging song to inspire his allies to rage. Affected allies gain a +2 morale bonus to Strength and Constitution and a +1 morale bonus on Will saving throws, but also take a –1 penalty to AC. While under the effects of inspired rage, allies other than the skald cannot use any Charisma-, Dexterity-, or Intelligence-based skills (except Acrobatics, Fly, Intimidate, and Ride) or any ability that requires patience or concentration. At 4th level and every four levels thereafter, the song's bonuses on Will saves increase by 1; the penalty to AC doesn't change. At 8th and 16th levels, the song's bonuses to Strength and Constitution increase by 2. (Unlike the berserker's rage ability, those affected are not fatigued after the song ends.) If an ally has her own rage class ability (such as berserker's rage or skald's inspired rage), she may use the Strength, Constitution, and Will saving throw bonuses, as well as AC penalties, based on her own ability and level instead of those from the skald (still suffering no fatigue afterward). However, inspired rage does not

allow the ally to activate abilities dependent on other rage class abilities, such as rage powers; the ally must activate her own rage class ability in order to use these features.

This ability replaces distraction and fascinate.

Versatile Performance (Ex): At 2nd level, a skald can choose one type of Perform skill associated with the skald class. He can use his bonus in that skill in place of his bonus in the associated skills listed below. When substituting in this way, the skald uses his total Perform skill bonus, including class skill bonus, in place of the associated skill's bonus, whether or not he has ranks in that skill or if it is a class skill. At 7th level, and every five levels thereafter, the skald can select an additional type of Perform to substitute.

The types of Perform and their associated skills are: Oratory (Diplomacy, Sense Motive), Percussion (Handle Animal, Intimidate), Sing (Bluff, Sense Motive), String (Bluff, Diplomacy), and Wind (Diplomacy, Handle Animal).

This ability modifies versatile performance.

Rage Powers (Ex): At 2nd level and every other level thereafter, a skald learns a rage power that affects the skald and any allies under the influence of his inspired rage. This cannot be a rage power that requires the creature to spend a standard action or rounds of rage to activate it. For example, the skald cannot choose terrifying howl (which requires a standard action to activate), but can choose knockback (which is made in place of a melee attack). Unless otherwise noted, a skald cannot select an individual rage power more than once.

When starting an inspired rage, the skald chooses which rage powers (if any) to add to the song, and all affected allies gain the benefit of these rage powers, using the bard's level as their effective berserker level. The skald uses his bard level as his berserker level for the purpose of selecting rage powers that require a minimum berserker level. If the rage power's effects depend on the skald's ability modifier, affected allies use the skald's ability modifier instead of their own for the purposes of this effect.

If a rage power requires another rage power (such as disruptive, which requires superstition), the skald cannot grant that rage power to allies unless he can also grant that power's prerequisite. He may add multiple rage powers to an inspired rage at the same time using this ability (such as granting superstition and disruptive simultaneously). If a rage power can only be used a certain number of times per day or per rage (such as renewed vigor), each ally affected by the inspired rage song is subject to that limit (with once per rage abilities limited to once per inspired rage). If the skald has rage powers from another source, he (but not his allies) can use those rage powers during an inspired rage. He cannot select a duplicate rage power, unless that rage power can be taken multiple times. If the skald has the ability to rage from another source, he can use his skald rage powers during that rage as well.

This ability replaces song talents and advanced song talents.

Song of Marching (Su): At 3rd level, a skald can use raging song to inspire his allies to move faster without suffering from fatigue. By expending 1 round of raging song, the skald invigorates allies within 60 feet, who may hustle for the next hour; this movement counts as a walk (not a hustle) for the purpose of accruing nonlethal damage and fatigue. The skald must continue to perform the song for the remainder of the hour, otherwise its effects end, but only 1 round of raging song is expended for that hour.

This ability replaces inspire competence and suggestion.

Uncanny Dodge (Ex): At 4th level, a skald gains the ability to react to danger before his senses would normally allow him to do so. He cannot be caught flat-footed, nor does he lose his Dexterity bonus to AC if the attacker is invisible. He still loses his Dexterity bonus to AC if he is immobilized. A skald with this ability can still lose his

Dexterity bonus to AC if an opponent successfully uses the feint action against him. If a skald already has uncanny dodge from a different class, he automatically gains improved uncanny dodge (see below) instead.

This ability replaces wide audience.

Song of Strength (Su): At 7th level, a skald can use raging song to inspire his allies to superhuman feats of strength. Once each round while the skald uses this raging song, allies within 60 feet who can hear the skald may add half the bard's level to a Strength check or Strength-based skill check.

This ability replaces skilled performer.

Improved Uncanny Dodge (Ex): At 8th level and higher, a skald can no longer be flanked. This defense denies enemies the ability to sneak attack the skald by flanking him, unless the attacker has at least four more levels in a class that grants sneak attack than the target has bard levels. If a character already has uncanny dodge (see above) from another class, the levels from the classes that grant uncanny dodge stack to determine the minimum level required to flank the character.

This ability replaces dirge of doom.

Dirge of Doom (Su): At 12th level, a skald can use his raging song to create a sense of growing dread in his enemies, causing them to become shaken. This only affects enemies that are within 30 feet and able to hear the skald's raging song. The effect persists for as long as the enemy is within 30 feet and the skald continues his raging song. This stacks with other fear effects except another Dirge of Doom, increasing the fear effect by 1 level. This is a sonic mind-affecting fear effect, and relies on audible components.

This ability replaces soothing performance.

Damage Reduction (Ex): At 14th level, a skald gains damage reduction. Subtract 1 from the damage the skald takes each time he is dealt damage from a weapon or a natural attack. At 17th and 20th levels, this damage reduction increases by 1. Damage Reduction can reduce damage to 0, but not below 0. Additionally, the skald grants this DR to all allies affected by his inspired rage.

This ability replaces frightening tune.

Song of the Fallen (Su): At 18th level, a skald can temporarily revive dead allies to continue fighting, with the same limitations as the *raise* spell. The skald selects a dead ally within 60 feet and expends 1 round of raging song to bring that ally back to life. The revived ally is alive but staggered. Each round, the skald may expend another 1 round of raging song to keep that ally alive for another round. The ally automatically dies if the skald ends this performance or is interrupted. The skald may revive multiple allies with this ability (either at the same time or over successive rounds) but must expend 1 round of raging song per revived ally per round to maintain the effect.

This ability replaces funeral ballad.

Master Skald (Su): At 20th level, a skald's inspired rage no longer gives allies a penalty to AC, nor limits what skills or abilities they can use. Allies with rage class abilities may use features dependent on those abilities without restriction, such as a berserker's rage powers. Finally, when making a full attack, affected allies may make an additional attack each round (as if using a *haste* effect).

This ability replaces deadly performance.